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Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 012641

45
ORIGIN SS-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

66604
DRAFTED BY S/S:WHLUERS:CM
1/19/74 EXT. 28448
APPROVED BY S/S:WHLUERS
---------- 026900
O 191822Z JAN 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 012641

FOLLOWING SENT WHITE HOUSE INFO PEKING HONG KONG TAIPEI
BEIRUT FROM SECSTATE WASHDC 19 JAN 74:

QUOTE S E C R E T STATE 012641

TOSEC 246

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, VS, CH, PF
SUBJECT: PRC-GVN CLASH IN PARACELS
WHITE HOUSE PLEASE PASS SAM 86970
FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER

1. ARMED CLASHES IN PARACELS HAVE APPARENTLY RESULTED IN A NUMBER OF CASUALTIES ON GVN SIDE, WITH GVN REPORTS OF TWO GUNBOATS POSSIBLY SUNK BY PRC STYX MISSILES. GVN HAS ASKED FOR US ASSISTANCE IN SEARCH AND RESCUE. SITUATION COMPLICATED BY REPORTED PRESENCE ON PATTLE ISLAND (GVN OCCUPIED) OF US CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE OF US DEFENSE ATTACHE OFFICE, BASED IN DANANG. WE DO NOT KNOW WHY HE IS THERE.

2. WE HAVE REQUESTED DOD TO INSTRUCT US NAVY TO STAY OUT OF AREA. TWO DAYS AGO (JAN 17) WE DISCUSSED SITUATION WITH AMB MARTIN BY PHONE AND EXPRESSED OUR INTEREST IN COOLING SITUATION. WE ARE TRYING TO GET MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING
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SITUATION OF US CITIZEN.

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3. PRESS STATEMENT HERE WILL BE ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

--USG TAKES NO POSITION ON CONFLICTING CLAIMS TO PARACELS,
BUT STRONGLY DESIRES PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF DISPUTE.

--WE UNDERSTAND THAT BOTH PRC AND GVN HAVE OCCUPIED DIFFERENT
ISLANDS WITHIN PARACEL GROUP FOR SOME YEARS. WE DO NOT

KNOW CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH PRESENT CLASH AROSE.

--US MILITARY FORCES ARE NOT INVOLVED.

4. WE ARE TELLING US EMBASSY SAIGON TO ADVISE GVN TO TAKE
MINIMUM STEPS TO DEFEND SELVES AND TO RESCUE ITS CITIZENS
(AND OUR US OFFICIAL), BUT TO DO WHAT IT CAN TO AVOID
FURTHER DIRECT CLASHES WITH PRC FORCES. LAST THING GVN OR
OURSELVES NEED AT THIS TIME IS PRC/GVN CONFRONTATION OVER
ISLANDS LEADING TO LESS RATIONAL PRC ROLE IN VN CONFLICT.
RUSH UNQUOTE RUSH

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NNN

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